

**Willamette Action Team for Ecosystem Restoration (WATER)
Steering Team Meeting
October 14, 2016**

http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/tmt/documents/FPOM/2010/Willamette_Coordination/Steering_team/WST.html

Facilitator's Summary

ACTION	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	BY WHEN?
Make agreed upon edits to the 9/8 meeting summary	DSC	ASAP
Provide HOR study to ST and RM&E team	Dan	ASAP
Send entire Middle Fork RM&E Plan to Steering Team (not just the summary)	Joyce	ASAP
Add Keith and Liza to the Steering Team email list	DSC	ASAP
Convene discussion of attorney re: NPCC membership in the WATER process	DSC	11/10 meeting
Have discussion with each agency's own RM&E representative to identify questions and desired outcomes for all three elevated issue papers to support discussion at next ST meeting.	All	11/10 meeting
Make revisions and edits to the Middle Fork RM&E summary.	Marc, Brad	Before 11/10 meeting
The G4 will meet in early November to begin the RPA/COP alignment process and will update the Steering team on progress	G4	11/10 meeting

In the room: Chris Allen (USFWS), Joyce Casey (Corps), Brad Eppard (Corps), Eric Hein (USFWS), Marc Liverman (NMFS), Dan Spear (BPA), Jason Sweet (BPA), and Karl Weist (NPCC);

Participants on the Phone: Nancy Gramlich (ODEQ), Steve Marx (ODFW);

Facilitation Team: Donna Silverberg and Tory Hines, DS Consulting

Welcome

Donna Silverberg, DS Consulting, welcomed the group and explained that the purpose of the day's session was to discuss and reach consensus on process and outcomes for efforts related to the Willamette system.

Review of 9/8 Steering Team Meeting Summary

The group reviewed the Steering Team meeting summary from September 8th. Steve Marx, ODFW, asked for clarification on the bullet that stated "the group agreed that more than 1:1 replacement is the goal" (pg. 5); he asked whether RM&E members would flesh out the specifics of the target in the RM&E plan. Marc Liverman, NMFS, stated that the 1:1 replacement ratio is a minimum and serves as trigger, which leads to additional analysis. The 1:1 language is in the COP as a tool for pursuing passage, not as a reintroduction goal. Chris Allen, USFWS, asked that the language be revised to articulate that the replacement ratio of 1:1 is a trigger, rather than a goal. Since no one recalled the discussion, Donna asked whether removing the language from the summary might not be a better approach. Team members present were polled and agreed to remove the language from the September meeting summary.

- **ACTION:** DS Consulting will remove the following language from page 5 of the September meeting summary: “the group agreed that more than 1:1 replacement is the goal”.

Review of 9/8 Action Items

The Steering Team reviewed the action items from their September meeting.

1. Follow up with USFWS re: attending Steering Team meetings. *Dan Spear, BPA, followed up with USFWS. As a result, USFWS has recommitted to the WATER process and both Eric Hein, USFWS, and Chris Allen, USFWS, were in attendance today. USFWS will be part of the ST, RM&E, Fish passage and managers Forum teams.*
2. Select date for Managers’ Forum meeting. *DS Consulting scheduled the Managers’ Forum meeting for December 1st, however, a conflict has come up and they are working to reschedule for either later in the day on December 1st or for the 2nd.*
3. Review and provide additional edits to the August Steering Team meeting summary to Emily. *No additional edits were submitted.*
4. Provide FY17 budget to Emily to send to Steering Team. *Joyce Casey, Corps, will follow up with Ian Chane to see that Emily receives the FY17 budget. [Facilitator’s note: the FY17 budget has been posted on the Steering Team’s website.]*
5. Provide Steering Team’s list of elevation process and criteria to the RM&E team for information and feedback. *DSC presented the Steering Team’s list of elevation process and criteria to the RM&E team at the October 4th meeting. Three issues were elevated for today’s meeting.*
6. Discuss ways to include NPCC as a member in the WATER process. *NPCC, Corps and NMFS attorneys (John, Gail and Jane) still need to meet and discuss NPCC’s membership status in the WATER process. DSC will help to convene this discussion.*

Marc asked that the role of NPCC be added as an agenda item for the Managers’ Forum meeting, as well as, the status of the WATER guidelines. Marc noted that the 2008 WATER guidelines remain in draft form and are not signed; thus, if desired, the Managers could decide to revise them to include NPCC. NPCC isn’t a named member, but is shown in the graphic on page 16 of the Guidelines which causes some confusion. One question was: what is the legal connect for membership in the WATER process? What is the connection with other partners (e.g. ODEQ, USFS, ODF and NPCC)? What should it be? Joyce noted that the entire WATER process is moving into a new stage of BiOp implementation. This is forcing a new look at the strategy that will best suit the region during the next phase. All agreed this should be an issue at the upcoming Managers Forum meeting.

RM&E Team Issue Elevation

The Steering Team reviewed the issue papers elevated to them by the RM&E team. Below are the general discussion points for each paper presented.

Issue 1: Ongoing analysis and reporting of paired-release returning adults

The RM&E Team asked the Steering Team to decide whether the paired release data should be analyzed in 2017 or if they should wait to analyze in a year when more data is available. The RM&E Team also asked for clarification as to how this data helps inform management decisions. Brad Eppard, Corps, noted that any analysis done this year will be duplicated the following year and the sample size will only increase by a few fish. Marc added that, if this is a low cost request for more information, it seems it should be granted. Joyce stated that by pushing this request out a year, it would free up money for other projects; however, by delaying the collection of data it could result in fragmented data collection and loss of institutional knowledge. Joyce felt that more information is needed for managers to make a decision on this request and others agreed.

Group members raised a series of questions:

- What are the compelling points motivating the need or lack of need for this (e.g. is the PI retiring? Does it cost a ton and the money is needed elsewhere? Or...)?
- What management decisions are you trying to answer with this test?
- What are the assumptions you are trying to test?
- Also: would getting the raw data provide enough information to address the interests R&E team members have regarding Detroit? Is a full analysis needed or could initial, raw information meet the needs of those advocating for a 2017 analysis?
 - If the answer to this is yes, Brad said this raw data could be provided very quickly to those who need/want to see it.

The group agreed that the RM&E team should stick with technical issues and let the Steering team address cost issues and money/funding priorities. Marc shared that, in the past, the rationale for funding projects has shifted and was difficult to know what would or would not be funded. Dan Spear, BPA, explained that the CRFM budgeting/funding process is dynamic and RM&E projects are not walled off from other Corps project funds. Typically, additional funding becomes available before the end of the fiscal year. The perception among some of the other agencies is that the Corps uses that extra money to fund what the Corps feels is a priority, rather than discussing this with the team to make collaborative decisions. Joyce recommended the discussion be developed for the Managers' Forum to address in the spring as part of a larger governance question.

Dan also noted that the final point referencing Head of Reservoir (HOR) bypass was studied in 2010 and he recalled that it was deemed unfeasible due to cost. Dan agreed to provide the consensus document on this point to the team.

- **ACTION:** Steering Team members will connect with their representative on the RM&E team to identify agency specific management questions and desired outcomes.
 - Steering Team members will review all three issue papers and come to the November meeting ready for discussion and decisions.
- **ACTION:** Dan will provide the HOR bypass study to Steering Team and RM&E members.

Issue 2: Annual parentage analysis, spawning surveys and screw-trapping

Steering Team members reviewed the issue paper and discussed the roles of the RPA, COP and HGMPs in regards to the authority over the issues presented. Marc began by asking which document has primary authority for prioritization of projects. All agreed that for hatcheries, the most recent consultation would be the primary source. For the RPA vs. COP, legal clarification should be sought. However, Joyce noted that the RPA comes straight from the BiOp, which puts it in front of the COP. The COP is an internal analysis used to help understand and guide implementation in accordance with the BiOp/RPA. Jason Sweet, BPA, agreed with Joyce's statement, noting that the COP is intended as the 5-year implementation plan of the RPA. Marc acknowledged that the RPA has many unanswered questions which the COP seeks to answer. He noted that the RM&E team is asking which criteria to follow and suggested that, if one document provides more specificity than the other, it should be the source of reference.

Eric Hein, USFWS, (and very new to the region) asked if the Services had been included in the creation and review of the COP as a decision document for the RPA. Brad responded, yes, the Services were involved in the development of the COP and agreed to its terms. Marc noted that the Services were never asked whether or not the COP could be expected to meet the RPAs. While there was very high, DC level agreement for the overall global approach, there never was (and it still is needed) a pointed discussion about whether and how the RPAs and COP are aligned.

Joyce suggested that the Corps needs to track the accomplishments under the COP and suggested that the G4 managers work with their staff to develop an alignment document. The goal of this exercise, and the document that would be produced, would be to clearly articulate what should be the guiding the technical teams so they no longer have to figure out which document leads. She also recommended that a one-page memo be presented at the Managers' Forum which outlines the confusion over the authority of the RPA versus the COP, and also recommends a process forward to resolve the confusion.

Donna asked the non-federal agencies for input on whether they believe this is a good time to address the procedural issues of the RPA versus the COP. Karl Weist, NPCC, Steve Marx, ODFW, and Nancy Gramlich, ODEQ, agreed that the issue of which document to follow impacts productivity at meetings and needs to be addressed sooner than later. They supported the idea of the Corps, BPA and the Services working to sort this out for presentation to the region. Marc proposed that the G4 should read the RPA and COP in tandem and tease out the assumptions.

- **ACTION:** The Federal 'Group of 4' managers (G4) will meet in early November to begin the RPA/COP alignment work and will update the Steering Committee on their progress at the 11/10 meeting.

With regards to the issue paper elevated by the RM&E team, Marc noted that the life cycle model is a high priority for NMFS and, as such, he feels strongly that those running the model should be asked whether or not the data discussed in this issue paper is needed. Do we need all of the data? Or is there a portion of the data which is better suited to support the model? As with the first issue paper: what assumption is being tested with this study? Will the study help those who are working on the life cycle analysis? What management decision is this study seeking to inform?

- **ACTION:** Steering Team members will follow up with their RM&E representative to answer the above stated question.

Issue 3: Green Peter out-planting, parentage, spawning surveys and screw-trapping

The Steering Team then reviewed the final issue paper and noted that it highlighted similar concerns as noted in Issue 2. Mainly, that there are conflicting opinions regarding appropriate interpretation and authority of the RPA and the COP.

Donna noted that the RM&E Team is seeking resolution on this issue by February 2017; as such, it is important to seek alignment between the two documents as soon as possible.

Joyce noted that, with each issue paper presented, an important question remains that needs attention: What is the critical management question that is being answered or influenced by the research? Input on this from the technical team members to their individual managers would be helpful for future elevation so that the Steering team can then discuss the policy implications of decisions that might flow from their discussion.

- **ACTION:** Steering Team members will follow up with their RM&E representative to answer the 'management decision' question stated above.

Middle Fork Sub-basin RM&E Plan

Steering Team members reviewed and discussed the two proposed Middle Fork Sub-basin RM&E summaries. Donna asked them to provide clear guidance on the review process and timeline. Marc shared that both summaries were helpful and likely should be combined. He thought more description of the assumptions is needed as is more specificity in order for the Steering Team and managers to understand the "why" behind the RM&E. For example, pre-spawn mortality (PSM) is

listed as an issue, with hatchery racks/weirs listed as a reason for high PSM; however, there is no additional detail as to why the hatchery racks/weirs are a problem. Joyce agreed and stated that the plan should include enough information to inform 2021 decisions. She also noted that the summaries provide a high level overview and that the full plan, which the Steering team still would like to see, likely discusses the assumptions in more detail.

- **ACTION:** Joyce will send the entire draft Middle Fork Sub-basin RM&E plan to the Steering Team. The final RM&E plan and summary should be completed before the Managers Forum in December.
- **ACTION:** Marc will follow up with Stephanie and Brad will follow up with Rich to address questions/concerns regarding the Middle Fork Sub-basin RM&E summary.

Preparation for Managers' Forum Session

Donna asked Steering Team members what issues and achievements they feel are worth sharing with the Managers at the December meeting. They brainstormed the following:

- Clarity on high level policy issues, such as the confusion over the governing authority between the RPA, COP and HGMPs.
 - Provide the Managers with a status update on the RPA/COP/HGMP discussion
 - Seek Manager input/agreement as to which document is the primary guide
 - Get Manager input on the proposed process for resolving any conflicts that might arise in the alignment exercise.
- How are the teams doing?
 - Provide the Managers with a list of what the teams have been addressing and what items the Steering team has addressed (e.g. MF RM&E Plan) prior to their meeting.
 - Review DSC's tracking document that shows the issues for each team and outcomes.
- Highlight collaborative milestones:
 - Remind the Managers of the HGMPs that were delivered to NMFS on behalf of the Corps, BPA and ODFW, as a way to highlight the collaborative progress among the agencies.

Next Steps

Steering Team members will connect with their RM&E representatives to discuss the management needs and technical concerns behind the issues elevated. They will come prepared to discuss further at the November Steering Team meeting.

The Corps and NMFS will continue their efforts to draft the Middle Fork Sub-basin RM&E Plan and Summary.

DS Consulting will work to schedule a conversation between the attorneys regarding the NPCC membership issue. They will also continue to convene the Managers' Forum meeting (including drafting an agenda for input).

The next Steering Team meeting is scheduled for **November 10th from 1:00-4:00 at the DS Consulting office.**

Donna thanked the group for their good discussion, and with that the meeting was adjourned.

This summary is respectfully submitted by DS Consulting. Suggested edits are welcome and can be sent to Tory at tory@dsconsult.co.